Connections
A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

April 9, 2015

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

The Future of Maintenance Operations Employee Input Needed

by Beth Wright

As we look to the future when funding levels drop to a $325 million annual construction budget in 2017, we must start planning how we will handle maintenance operations. At this funding level, we will only be able to maintain 8,000 miles of roads and have limited maintenance on the remaining 26,000 miles. Also, to invest more time and effort on the pavements and bridges, we will likely need to lower our level of service on the maintenance of other assets in our system.

So exactly what will limited maintenance look like? To answer that question we have developed 12 teams of employees to review our current practices and look for ways to consistently reduce services. The teams have begun their work and are looking for ideas from all employees in these 12 areas of operations. If you have an idea on how we can stretch our dollars in maintaining our pavements and bridges, or if you have an idea how we can reduce our level of effort in other areas, please share your ideas with the team.

You can share your ideas through email, or by submitting a paper form. Each team's initial recommendations are due to the team sponsors by May 31, so get your ideas in early. For those employees who also will attend the upcoming DOMInno meeting in Springfield, the teams will be available in person to discuss any ideas you might have during the Innovations Challenge event. Look for them in the registration entry hall.

Please take time to submit your ideas to the teams. We will only be successful if we all work together.

Maintenance Team Areas Under Review and Email Groups

- Bridge Team (deck repair, structural repair, flushing) Email: MT325BridgeTeam
- Division Budget Team (division equipment, public outreach) Email: MT325DivBudgetTeam
- Drainage Team (pipe culverts, box culverts, clean & repair) Email: MT325DrainageTeam
- Facilities Team (buildings, salt domes, rest areas) Email: MT325FacilitiesTeam
- Guardrail Team (cables, traffic barriers, fences, attenuators) Email: MT325GuardrailTeam
- Pavement Team (potholes, patching roads, chip seals) Email: MT325PavementTeam
- Roadsides Team (mowing, tree removal, litter pickup, herbicides) Email: MT325RoadsidesTeam
- Roadway Debris Team (roadway debris, deer removal, sweeping) Email: MT325RoadwayDebrisTeam
- Signals Team (signals, lighting, ITS, motorist assist, customer service) Email: MT325SignalsTeam
- Signing Team (roadway signs) Email: MT325SigningTeam
- Striping Team (centerline and edge line striping) Email: MT325StripingTeam
- Winter Ops Team (winter operations policy & equipment, weather service) Email: MT325WinterOpsTeam

Printable form - 325Teams_IdeaForm.pdf
Mail forms via interoffice mail to: Central Office Maintenance Division

Commission Focuses on Pavement Conditions

by Bob Brendel

Presentations at last week's meeting of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission pointed out wildly differing views of Missouri pavement conditions – the reality of where they are heading without additional investment and an innovative possibility for future pavement choices.

Brian Reagan, transportation systems analysis engineer, explained that MoDOT has historically spent $160 million per year on

contract work on the state's supplementary system of roads and bridges. Currently 73 percent of those highways are in good condition. Implementation of "Missouri's 325 System," however, will mean the supplementary routes will only receive limited routine maintenance in the future. Reagan said that in 10 years the numbers would flip – with just 27 percent of the supplementary system remaining in good condition, and that it would cost $2.8 billion to restore it to today's condition.

Two changes to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission's leadership were announced at last week. Left to right, newly appointed Commissioner Tom Waters, Commission Chairman Stephen Miller, MoDOT Director Dave Nichols, Commission Vice Chairman Joe Carmichael, Gregg Smith, the new president of the Missouri Transportation Finance Corporation board of directors, and Michael Pace, the new chairman of the audit committee.

The Commission also had a very personal picture of Missouri's rural roads painted for it by Andrea "Andy" Jackson of LaPlata, who, with her husband, has operated a farm for 45 years. She showed pictures of narrow, two-lane roads that were rutted and riddled with potholes and deteriorating pavement. She then described the many ways those roads in northern Missouri are used: by heavy trucks carrying grain, rock, cattle and fertilizer, by tractors of all sizes pulling various types of equipment, by combines, school buses, teenage drivers, Amish horse-and-buggies and even recreational cyclists.

"These supplementary highways are vital to our economy," she said. "But if left to deteriorate and without shoulders, I worry about safety."

At the other end of the spectrum was a presentation by Tim Sylvester, president of Integrated Roads, a firm that produces precast concrete panels for roadways with intelligent transportation sensors built into the panels. He suggested his system could be used to rebuild Interstate 70 as a public-private partnership by allowing drivers to subscribe to the technology embedded in the pavement that would facilitate driverless vehicles and wireless recharging of electric vehicles.

OTHER ITEMS

Legislative Committee – Vice Chairman Joe Carmichael noted that the Senate Transportation Committee had taken "an important step" by unanimously passing Senate Bill 540 that would raise the state's fuel tax by two cents each of the next three years, and thereafter ties the rate to the Consumer Price Index to guard against inflation. But he also said the clock is ticking on the 2015 legislative session which ends May 15.

Consideration of Bids for Transportation Improvements – State Design Engineer Eric Schroeter reported to the Commission the results of the March 20 bid opening. MoDOT received 118 bids on 41 calls, including four projects with local funding. The Commission awarded all to the low bidder, except for two that were rejected due to excessive bids.

Commission Leadership – Commission Chairman Stephen Miller announced two changes to MHTC committee and board assignments. Michael Pace is taking over as chairman of the audit committee and Gregg Smith is the new president of the Missouri Transportation Finance Corporation board of directors. The meeting was also the first for new commissioner Tom Waters of Orrick, Mo., whose appointment was confirmed by the Missouri Senate on March 19.

Commission Resolution Given to MoDOT Director Dave Nichols

At the March meeting of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, a sesolution for outstanding service to the state of Missouri was presented to MoDOT Director Dave Nichols. This was the last commission meeting Nichols will be attending before his retirement May 1.

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO DAVE NICHOLS FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE STATE OF MISSOURI

RECOMMENDATION: Adoption of the following Resolution.

WHEREAS, Dave Nichols began his distinguished career with the Missouri Department of Transportation on May 1, 1984, and will be retiring on May 1, 2015, after 31 years of service to the State of Missouri; and

WHEREAS, Dave Nichols served in a variety of capacities beginning as a Construction

MoDOT Director Dave Nichols (left) accepted the Resolution of Appreciation from the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission's Vice Chairman Joe Carmichael (right).

Inspector in the former District One, moving through increasingly responsible assignments of resident engineer and Assistant to the District Construction Engineer in the former District Four, then as Assistant District Engineer and District Engineer in the former District One, then in the Central office as Director of Project Development, the Director of Program Delivery, and the Chief Engineer, culminating in his promotion as Director; and

Read more of the Resolution here - Nichols Resolution.

View all photos of the presentation here - Presentation Photos.

View from the Chair

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission

by Stephen R. Miller
Missouri Highways and Transportation Chairman

Leaders on All Sides Step Forward To Advance '2+2+2+Indexing'

"Inaction is not an option." That is the message we have taken to the General Assembly as we sound the alarm concerning the potential loss of hundreds of millions of federal tax dollars paid by Missourians. Fortunately, Senator Doug Libla of Poplar Bluff, chair of the Senate Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety Committee, had a response – one that hangs on a plaque in his office – "Do It Now."

Senator Libla and his committee members took an important first step last week when they unanimously passed Senate Bill 540 which would raise the state fuel tax by two cents per gallon for three consecutive years, and then tie the future tax to the Consumer Price Index to guard against inflation.

Most significant is the manner in which SB 540 passed. It was unanimous with all committee Democrats and Republicans voting for it. Moreover, those senators represent both urban and rural interests as well as diverse geographic regions of our state. In an era where government is often plagued by gridlock, partisanship and parochialism; what a refreshing change. Full credit is given to these senators for their leadership on this issue and for taking the time to understand the problem and to advance a solution.

The "2+2+2+indexing" proposal now moves to the calendar for Senate floor debate which is expected to come in the next few days. Read More - View From the Chair.

Roberta Broeker Appointed Interim MoDOT Director

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission appointed Roberta Broeker as the interim director of MoDOT. Broeker will assume the position when MoDOT's

MoDOT Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker brings 35 years of service with the State of Missouri to her recent appointment as interim director.

current director, Dave Nichols, retires on May 1.

A certified public accountant, Broeker has enjoyed a 35-year career with the state of Missouri. She has served as MoDOT's chief financial officer for the last 10 years, and during that time has successfully served three MoDOT directors, giving her invaluable insight about leading the organization.

"Roberta has the skills and experience to guide the department while we search for a permanent replacement," said Commission Chair Stephen Miller. "With Roberta's help, we are positioned for a seamless transition for employees, customers, and stakeholders."

The commission has hired Grant Cooper & Associates to assist with identifying potential candidates to lead the department. They plan to announce the next permanent director of MoDOT sometime this fall.

Internet Explorer Upgrade

In today's ever changing world of technology it is important to keep up with new developments in order to not be left behind. Currently MoDOT is operating on Internet Explorer 8 as its standard browser. Information Systems is looking to upgrade MoDOT's standard browser this spring. Here is what they had to say on the topic:

Why are we updating Internet Explorer?
MoDOT has been planning for the upgrade to our standard browser because it is becoming outdated and certain things won't run in Internet Explorer 8. This project looks to upgrade to Internet Explorer 11 to bring MoDOT to a more current browser.

What are the differences between IE8 and IE11 for the normal user?
There is little visible difference between IE11 and IE8. Primarily, the key changes are performance improvements such as improved page loading times and faster JavaScript performance. In addition, the security and privacy updates with IE11 are vastly superior to IE8 at defeating social engineering attacks.

Will I need to redo all of by bookmarks?
No, each persons' bookmarks and trusted sites will both be retained after the IE11 Upgrade. However, users may need to modify their view settings to show/hide them.

When we upgrade to IE11 am I supposed to use it or can I still use Google Chrome or Firefox?
The standard MoDOT browser will be IE11. Should any user have performance issues with this upgraded browser, please contact the IS Help Desk and we will help you locate the appropriate browser.

Team Talk - Be Safe

by Roberta Broeker

Hello Team MoDOT! I don't know if any of you enjoy thunderstorms, but I am hoping with all this rain we are getting that April showers really do bring May flowers.

March 23-27 was National Work Zone Awareness Week. I was proud to see so many people wearing orange in support of work zone awareness during the week, as well as seeing all the district events to help Missouri be aware of this important effort to increase the safety for both Missouri drivers and workers in work zones. While a week dedicated to work zone safety is wonderful, it still falls short in my opinion. Awareness for work zone safety should be a yearlong endeavor, not something that is only focused on a single week of the year.

Safety is a core element of MoDOT's values. It is the first fundamental principle listed on our values to live by as well as one of our tangible results.

BE SAFE

I'm Safe. My knowledge, awareness and attitude make me a safe employee.

What I Use is Safe. I properly use personal protective equipment, procedures, equipment and materials to ensure my safety.

Where I Am is Safe. My environment, building and job site are prepared and maintained to ensure my co-workers, partners and I are safe.

My Customers are Safe. I consider the impact, timing, awareness, visibility and flow through work areas.

So We Go Home Safe. I share safety information with my team and speak up when I see something is unsafe.

Even when everyone on Team MoDOT is doing their job just as they should, we know that sometimes motorists are inattentive or distracted. That seems to be the case for all three work zone crashes during February and March that involved a MoDOT vehicle. While our crews were not a contributing factor to those crashes, they still occurred, putting members of our team in danger. One of the most recent work zone crashes occurred last week in Kansas City where a crew that was cleaning storm drains was hit by a motorist. Fortunately there were no injuries reported.

I urge all of our workers in work zones, and everywhere else we work, to not only pay attention to their surroundings for their own safety, but to speak up when they see something that is unsafe. Failure to pay attention or act to correct something is simply too big a gamble to take.

I was saddened to hear that on the first day of National Work Zone Awareness Week there was a fatality in a North Carolina Department of Transportation work zone. An engineering technician named William Bailey was killed in the line of duty. He leaves behind a wife and two young daughters. This tragic loss is something that could have been avoided, and is something that MoDOT has experienced far too often. We remember and we honor our 131 coworkers who died in service to Missouri, and it is my hope that we will never have to add to that number.

Although National Work Zone Awareness Week is over, let's keep the momentum going. Never stop educating the public about work zone safety. Urge your family and friends to pay attention while driving through all work zones, no matter if they are long term or moving operations. And watch after each other out there so everyone can go home safe.

Thank you, and stay safe Team MoDOT!

MoDOT Takes Steps to Protect Water Resources During Projects

MoDOT construction staff and private contractors who work on state road projects will be required to complete a class on how to prevent storm water runoff pollution.
The training is one of several remedial actions MoDOT has agreed to in response to action by the Environmental Protection Agency, which found the state in violation of the Clean Water Act. The U.S. Department of Justice filed a civil action against MoDOT for violations that occurred on two construction projects in 2010 – the U.S. Route 54 Expressway in Camden County and U.S. Route 67 in Wayne County.

As part of the settlement with EPA, MoDOT will:

- Pay a fine of $750,000,
- Provide increased training on erosion and sediment control,
- Designate additional MoDOT and contractor storm water compliance personnel,
- Complete additional tracking through a storm water compliance database,
- Provide ongoing self-reporting of compliance with the consent decree and storm water permit, and
- Accept additional penalties if the consent decree is violated.

"We take environmental responsibility very seriously at MoDOT and have for many years," Assistant Chief Engineer Kathy Harvey said. "We have performance measures in place to track our compliance of federal and state law, and we are proud of our record. However, in these two extreme rain events five years ago, our policies and procedures failed to contain storm water within the project limits.
"We take responsibility and are confident that the additional training and accountability that we will put in place with our employees and our contractor partners will result in heightened awareness of compliance with the Clean Water Act."

Trash Bash in April With the Annual Trash Bash

by Linda Wilson-Horn

Missourians from every corner of the state are asked to do spring cleaning outdoors and help fight litter through the state's annual No MOre Trash! Bash throughout the month of April. The Trash Bash is sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) as part of their ongoing No MOre Trash! statewide anti-litter campaign.

The annual Trash Bash encourages people to clean up litter across Missouri from roadsides, parks, neighborhoods, rivers, streams, trails and other places. Trash Bash activities in April also include educational efforts in schools, community events and Earth Day celebrations.

Each year, MoDOT alone spends about $6 million to remove litter from more than 385,000 acres of roadsides along 34,000 state highway miles. Annual volunteer efforts to pick up litter along Missouri highways are valued at $1 million.

Last year, more than 1,200 groups involving 14,000 volunteers participate in the Bash. Additionally, 157 educational events were held to emphasize the importance of not littering. Some participate through Adopt-A-Highway and Stream Team litter cleanup events. Missouri Stream Team Program volunteers removed 688 tons of litter from waterways and dedicated over $3.4 million dollars worth of volunteer time to litter removal statewide.

"Litter is a big problem because it's unattractive, costly, and harmful to the environment," said Stacy Armstrong, MoDOT No MOre Trash! coordinator. "If more people would keep their trash and properly dispose of it, or, better yet, recycle it, we would reduce the amount of litter we need to pick up in the first place."

Littering isn't just ugly, it also hurts wildlife and Missouri outdoors.

"Birds, fish, turtles and other animals get tangled in litter, such as plastic six-pack holders and fishing line, and it can kill them," said Conservation Department No MOre Trash! Coordinator Joe Jerek. "Litter poisons fish, birds and other wildlife and can cost a litterer up to $1,000 in fines and one year in jail."

Adopt-A-Highway groups have already begun their Trash Bash pickups. One group sent in this email after picking up last week. “Thanks to all that helped with our roadside cleanup. Kudos to the brethren. The older four are 70, 73, 79 and 82 and are in great shape,” said Lloyd Lyon, secretary for Hale City Lodge. “We did our regular mile of highway in Hale. We picked up nine bags of trash, which was quite a bit more than usual.”

Volunteers are needed across the state to participate in litter cleanup activities. Participants can report their cleanup efforts and will receive a thank you No MOre Trash! pin. For more information and to learn how to participate, visit www.nomoretrash.org.

What's Happening

Employee Advisory Council Seeking Input

The EAC has been working on possible recommendations to change MoDOT’s performance management process and MAPS system. The EAC is seeking input from employees through an online survey on seven options the council has developed. This survey will ask employees to rank the seven options in order of preference. As employees make their selections, the options will be reordered to the employee’s choices. Employees should make sure the options are in the order they select before submitting the survey.

Access to the survey will be made available on the EAC web page, which can be accessed by all employees from the EAC computers, or by following this link MAPS Survey.
Response should be submitted by April 17.

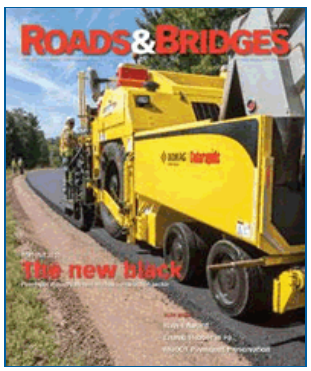
More Discounts for State Employee Recognition Week

Additional offers for State Employee Recognition Week June 8-12 are now available. Discounts for Springfield Cardinal and KC Royals baseball, Lodge of the Four Seasons and Six Flags St. Louis.

Click on the flier for more details - Special Offers.

Roads and Bridges Magazine Features MoDOT Employee Article

The March edition of Roads and Bridges Magazine featured an article by Maintenance Liaison Engineer Todd Miller. The article, entitled *Making it Last*, discusses the many factors in maintaining pavement conditions. Read the article online here - http://www.roadsbridges.com/making-it-last.



Deferred Compensation Update

Do you ever feel like everyone and their brother is a financial advisor? While studies have shown that financial professionals can better prepare savers to meet their goals, it's crucial that you understand not all financial professionals are created equal. What is the best way to differentiate these professionals? Lots and lots of questions. Learn more by watching this month's deferred compensation video - April DC Update.

April Service Anniversaries

30 Years
Todd L. Roth - NE
Mark Ronald Buscher - CD
George E. Allen - CD
Tina L. Grothoff - CD
Robert W. St. Gemme - SL
Gary Ferguson - SL
Richard James Arnall - SW
Jeff A. Rogers - SW
Darrell J. Bax - CO
Douglas Gerard Struemph - CO

25 Years
Johnnie G. Minear - NW
Ronnie Wayne Calhoon - NW
Mitchell Scott Miller - NE
Rickey J. Starke - CD
Phillip R. Thompson - CD
Douglas Edward Jones - CD
Cheryl Lyn Sprogoe - SL
Linda Gail Bass - SW
Johnny W. Woodruff - SW
Donivan A. Combs - SW
Dirk Evan Mays - SW
David R. Blythe - SE
Christopher Terry Brock - SE
Kelly B. Smith - SE
Terry S. Dry - SE
Shirley Ann Jones - SE
Valerie L. Minnick - CO
Carol S. Kliethermes - CO

20 Years
Robert D. Cole - NE
Jerry W. Smith - KC
Craig E. Rennick - CD
David Brown - SL
Glenn Everett Breckner - SW
Shawn Baptiste Lalumondiere - SE
Jim Copeland - CO

15 Years
Joseph Harold Chadwick - NW
Clinton Ray Cole - NW
George W. Woody - NW
David L. Waterman - NE
Jeffrey D. Leake - NE
Gregory A. Coffey - NE
Johnny S. Moore - KC
Jeffrey R. Alfrey - KC
Quyet The Dao - KC
Gregory Ramon Copeland - KC
Tyann E. Alexander - CD
Dale Edward Bollinger - CD
Jeffrey S. Wolff - CD
Carl Williams Mosley - CD
Barbie Kay Mcguire - CD
David William Warden - SL
Jason A. Bell - SL
Michael S. Beck - SW
Adam S. Mcrae - SW
Christopher P. Plaster - SW
Clayton D. Vaught - SW
Billy L. McHaffie - SW
Jeff L. Simmons - SW
Michael W. Douty - SW
Larry E. Wilson - SW
Rodney Lee Aldridge - SE
James Lee Bradford - SE
James R. Davis - SE
Jonathan Kemper - SE
Karen S. Mace - SE
Anthony J. Nichols - SE
Kevin M. Turner - SE
Jerry Kyle Yarber - SE
Rachel Renee Blalock - SE
Tony D. Dawson - SE
Steven Matthew Ealey - CO
Cindy Gaye Ressel - CO
Nicole A. Scott - CO
Darrell L. Patrick - CO
Patricia Ann Suling - CO
Timothy A. Taylor - CO

10 Years
Randy Lynn Ryan - NW
Jeremy S. Davison - NW
Thomas W. Owen - NE
Derek Andrew Olson - KC
Alvin R. Richardson - KC
Ronald W. Gassen - KC
Herbert Leroy Latchaw - KC
Robert Kevin Lansford - CD
Charles M. Smith - CD
Michael H. Hagen - SL
Patricia M. Cagle - SL
Dustin Matthew Sears - SW
Larry D. Allen - SW
Jessie Benjamin Philpot - SE
Luke L. Cooley - SE

5 Years
Dustin Douglas Lawrence - NW
Deborah Jean Naylor - KC
Michael Taylor Johnson - KC
Evan D. Phillips - CD
Robert Joseph Staufenbiel - SL
Tyler R. Lindsay - CO

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Editor: Tammy Wallace

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:

CO NW NE
KC CD SL SW SE

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Central Office

First Annual MoDOT Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament

Several Central Office employees participated in the First Annual Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament. The tournament was the best two out of three games. Cheese Whiz won the first game and We Could Carry Less the second. The third game was neck and neck until We Could Carry Less kicked on the power and won 15 to 11.

Team "We Could Carry Less" took first place in the MoDOT Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament. Team members above left to right - Kevin Kampeter, Jackie Kampeter, Ivan Schmidt, Nancy Schmidt, Eric Bernskoetter, Mendy Sundermeyer and Randall Hoskins.

Here's how the teams placed:

1st place team - We Could Carry Less: Kevin Kampeter, Jackie Kampeter, Ivan Schmidt, Nancy Schmidt, Eric Bernskoetter, Mendy Sundermeyer and Randall Hoskins.
2nd place team - Cheese Whiz: Kevin Arthaud, Kevin Kiesling, Eric Kopinski, Sharon Golden, Patrick Haslag, Kristen Bagwill and Amanda Henley.
3rd place team – Bridge: Rob Henson, Mark Fretwell, Marc Lueckenhoff, Andrew Crawford, Debbie Beckwith and Jessica Beckmann.
4th place team - Hit for Brains: Chris Engelbrecht, Brice Simmons, Callie Simmons, Joe Moore, Christine Moore, Cheyanne Stark, Bethany Belt and Brynn Schmauch.

Security Reminder for Employees

by Tim Taylor

Employees must be vigilant when walking near any MoDOT facility, watching for possible suspicious activity by other persons within the area. The Greenway walking path near 830 MoDOT Drive has specifically been an area where possible suspicious activity has been reported by employees.

Here are some ideas how you can be vigilant near the Greenway walking path and in other areas as well:

- Avoid dark areas as much as possible. Even if it means walking a bit further but staying in better lighting or with more people, do so. Remember, if it looks secluded or dark to you, it does to a person with criminal intentions.
- Look ahead before you walk into an area. Don't wait to look around only after you entered an area. Looking ahead can alert you to a situation or person you may want to avoid.
- Make a habit of looking behind and around you as you walk. This provides you a better chance of identifying a potential threat. Looking around also sends a signal to a criminal deciding on a target that you are likely a more difficult target than someone else.
- Don't assume that "rustling sound" in the bushes is a squirrel or some other animal. Your hearing can alert you to a potential problem just as well as your sight, so it is important to only use one ear bud when listening to an iPod, radio or some other device.
- Have a walking buddy, or walk in groups.
- Be realistic. It doesn't matter how big you are or how well trained in self-defense you may be, you are only human. Why take unnecessary chances?

Finally, always report suspicious activity by calling the Capitol Police (573) 522-2222 first and then call me. Calling me to ask me whether Capitol Police should be called or to ask me to call them is only delaying a response from Capitol Police. If an issue is not "in progress" and you are not sure if they should be called, then please by all means call me and we can discuss.

Tim Taylor, Senior Risk Management Specialist (573) 526-5201.

April Wellness Newsletter

Ease the Stress in Your Life

Stress is a part of everyone's life. Stress can be positive, from events like a new job, new baby or a new house. However, stress can be negative when our bodies are in a constant state of stress. Chronic stress can lead to a multitude of health symptoms or diseases such as headaches, high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, depression and anxiety.

Learning to manage stress can lead to better health. April is National Stress Awareness Month. Take this month to learn how to reduce your stress levels. Manage stress by following these tips from the National Headache Foundation found in this month's Wellness Newsletter by Coventry.

Central Office Happenings

MeeZone Event

Asthma: Signs, Symptoms and Triggers
Tuesday, April 21 - 2 to 3 p.m.
CO Human Resources Training Room B
601 West Main
or via video conference (contact Amanda Henley for the VC info – 573-526-5617)

Do you or a loved one suffer from asthma? Do you wheeze or feel short of breath when doing physical activity? Does even walking up a flight of stairs tighten your chest? Do you have attacks where you feel like you can't breathe? In the United States, more than 25 million people are known to have asthma. About seven million of these people are children.

Dr. Ben Francisco of the University of Missouri Health System will talk about the signs, symptoms, triggers and effective management of asthma.

Register through the LMS Student Center.

Earth Day Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed on April 24 for an Earth Day event on the south lawn of the Capitol. Volunteers are needed for two shifts, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 12 to 2 p.m.

Employees interested in helping should contact Jenna Vaughn by April 15 at Jenna.vaughn@modot.mo.gov or 573-526-4868.

For more information on Earth Day, visit the website - Earth Day.

First Aid / CPR / AED Classes Available

April 24 - 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 12 to 3:30 p.m.
601 West Main, Training Room B

Space is limited, so check with your supervisor, then sign up through the LMS Student Center.

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Northwest District

Continuing Our MoDOT Education

It's an exciting time in the Northwest District as we continue educating ourselves about MoDOT, how to help new employees acclimate to their job and acquiring skills to facilitate learning among our peers. Gear Up, New Employee Mentor Training and Train the Trainer are just some of the recent training's held at the district office. Upcoming education opportunities include media training, Geopak training and NEPA training. Please contact your supervisor if you are interested in attending one of these upcoming sessions.

A group of new employees go over some information they'll find helpful as they begin working at MoDOT. Human Resources Specialist Britney Richardson leads the group through the material.

New trainers also attended the Gear Up training to get a feel for the pace and atmosphere of the training they will soon be leading.

Each new employee has a mentor within their building or department. A training was recently held for those interested in becoming new employee mentors to familiarize them with the responsibilities of guiding someone through their first months with the department.

Becoming a trainer is a process and those interested in helping other employees through learning attended a Train the Trainer class, led by Senior Employee Development Specialist Kevin Arthaud. The class gave them tips on leading classes and how they can help facilitate learning in a training session.

Materials Division Welcomes Students

Missouri Western State University in St. Joseph offers associate and bachelor's degrees in construction engineering technology. Some of the students enrolled in the program stopped by the district office to meet with our Construction and Materials department. They were introduced to some of the instruments our inspectors and technicians use on a daily basis to ensure the best quality product goes into our roadways and visited the lab to see some testing in progress. While this is the first class to visit the Construction and Materials department in recent memory, the instructor hopes to continue the relationship, giving his students real-world experiences with the people that are performing the same type

of work each day.

Senior Materials Inspector Michael Powell shows a group of students some of the equipment our inspectors use.

Materials Inspector Janique Flora and Senior Materials Technician David Campbell demonstrated some of the techniques used in our lab to test materials for a group of MWSU students.

History on Display

Through the years, the Customer Relations department has become the gathering place for many items that are no longer in use in the department. Many of the items have been displaced by modern technology and some are fun curiosities that belonged to retirees and others who have gone before us. The Northwest District has two display cases of these items, housed in antique barrister-type bookcases discovered in storage. The bookcases and the items have been cleaned up, and several have been identified, but we're still working on labeling the items and citing their provenance. If you'd like to see any of the items, there is a case in the former credit union office near Customer Service and one case in the Northwest District Conference Center near Construction and Materials (who also have a great display of items specific to their department).

A barrister bookcase that was once in a field office now houses historical items in the Northwest Conference Center.

Old field specification books, old Missouri state maps, photos, commemorative signs and a plate from an old bridge are just a few of the items that have been handed over to the Customer Relations department through the years.

Some of the different signs on display in the Northwest Conference Center include rest area signs, bridge markers and route markers. The map in the center dates back to the 1920s.

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

April 9, 2015

Home

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print Entire Edition

Northeast District

The Adventures of Spring!

EAEC members Jackie Bordeleau and Richard Evans watch for bidders while New Florence Maintenance employee (and professional auctioneer) Matt Korman sell donuts for the employee relief fund.

On April 7, employees were treated to a somewhat "unusual" spring meeting that offered them the opportunity to get to know their colleagues across the district, as well as engage in personal and professional growth activities.

Who would have known however, that the event would have concluded with a donut auction!

The EAEC introduced the Northeast Employee Relief Fund at the spring meeting, by offering donuts for 50 cents for its first fundraiser. Since there were donuts left over at the end of the event, committee members called for an auctioneer in the room, and Matt Korman, New Florence maintenance, stepped up and helped raise another $100 for the NERF. According to Jonathan Bruner, EAEC president, NERF now has $335 in its fund.

The half-day event was a whirlwind, keeping the employees moving to enjoy brief presentations by a variety of speakers. The topics included motorcycle safety, innovations showcase winners, a game called Family "Work Zone" Feud, drugs on the streets and in our schools, grilling and stretching. In addition, other topics in a large group setting included roadside dangers from the MSHP, electrical safety from the local coop, and fall mushroom hunting from the MDC. Assistant Chief Engineer Kathy Harvey gave an update on the 325 program and legislation, and drawings were held for door prizes.

There were also representatives from local credit unions and the Missouri Employee Association, and the boot truck offered employees the opportunity to purchase new safety wear. *(Special thanks to Tina and Angel from St. Louis District TMC for coming up and handling the customer service center!)*

Adventures of SPRING

Nancy Hays, a registered dietician with Hannibal Regional Hospital, dishes out healthy kabobs following her presentation.

Everyone did a "stretch or two with Drew," a personal trainer from the local YMCA.

MoDOT Retiree Jim Zeiger played host for the Family "Work Zone" Feud game, which was one of the breakout sessions.

Around the District...

Missouri State Rep. Shumake was taken on a field trip to a deteriorating bridge in Marion County. He was accompanied by Assistant District Engineer Kevin James and Area Engineer Brian Haeffner.

Heather Buchanan, outreach coordinator for the NE Coalition for Roadway Safety, spoke to students at South Shelby High School during Arrive Alive Day. Marisa Ellison, facilitator for the Coalition, provided students the opportunity to "drive" on the Coalition's new driving simulator.

For Public Safety Week, Macon County Health Dept. held a child safety seat check event on April 7. Pictured is Stacy Corbin, a CPS Tech with the Health Department, along with Buckles. MCHD was able to give this little lady a brand new car seat provided by the NE Coalition for Roadway Safety.

Andrea "Andy" Jackson from Macon County spoke to the Commission about the importance of our supplementary road systems to the agricultural community. Amy Crawford, area engineer, introduced Andy to the Commission.

Area Engineer Brian Haeffner spoke to Mexico City Council about the deteriorating road system and the insufficient funding situation MoDOT is facing.

Lissie Youse, customer relations specialist, spoke to a communications class at Hannibal-LaGrange College about social media in the workplace.

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Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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CO NW NE
KC CD SL SW SE

Connections
A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

April 9, 2015

KansasCity District

Employee Meetings Combine Information, Fun with Teamwork

"The central theme of our meetings this year is teamwork." Kansas City District Engineer Dan Niec set the tone early Tuesday for a week of employee meetings. For three days, the more than 600 district employees convened for the spring employee meetings to not only learn about key topics, but engage in fellowship with team members, and some fun, courtesy of the Kansas City Employee Advisory Committee.

Topics included:

- Tough Choices Ahead
- A guest presentation on fraud with Bill Rogers from Audits and Investigations
- Communications Update, including some of the district's newest communication tools such as Daily DOT and the Kansas City News Network
- Safety and Health Update and Safety Awards
- Innovations Challenge (Internal link)
- Maintenance/Work Zone Safety
- 2015 Construction Season Overview
- Maintenance 325 planning team

In addition to presentations, the team also tested an anonymous texting program to submit questions and increase engagement with the presenters. Employees sent texts to a dedicated number and the questions presented on the overhead screen.

See all the photos on MoDOT Kansas City's sharepoint site. (Internal link.)

Safety Selfie Contest Promotes Safety with a Fun Twist

Kansas City MoDOT recently hosted a Safety Selfie contest among employees. The Communications team requested their best pics showing how they do their job safely for a chance to win some new MoDOT apparel. Some of the rules included:

- Photo can be individual or team but everyone in the shot must be in appropriate safety gear
- Bonus points for getting the MoDOT logo into the photo
- Photo should be clear
- Creativity counts

Read more about the Safety Selfie contest and see more photos on Daily DOT.

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CO NW NE
KC CD SL SW SE

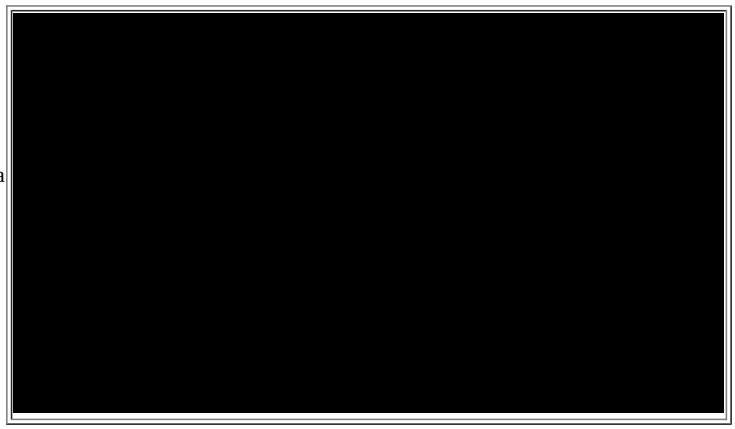
Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

April 9, 2015

DE Reminds Employees to "Play It Safe"

District Engineer David Silvester sent out a special video message to employees to thank them for their hard work and to also remind them to be safe on the job.



This message is scheduled as part of a series of videos in the district's MoDOT Weekly Connections where key topics are addressed and/or questions are answered by district representatives.

Dave's video address to the district can be found here on YouTube: https://youtu.be/v6HLna9gXyE or by clicking on the video to the right.

District Bridge Crew Springs Into Action

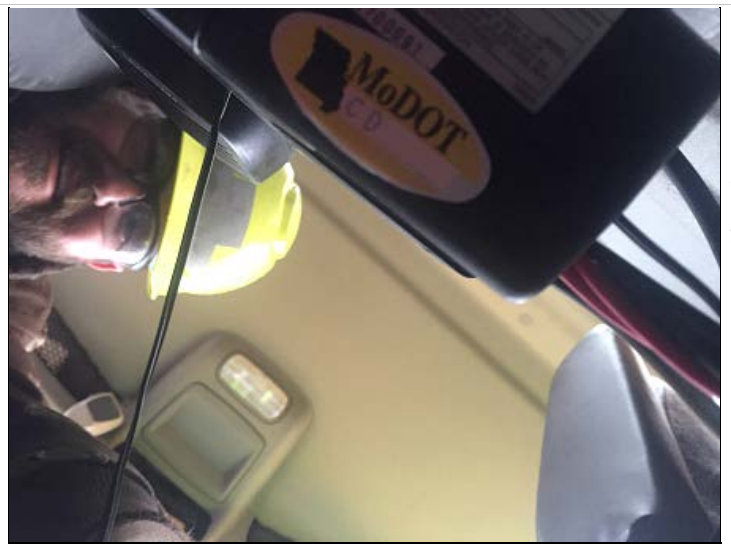
When a tractor trailer hit the barrier wall on the I-44 bridge over the Little Piney River at mile marker 174 in Phelps County on March 29, the district bridge crew jumped into action to make temporary repairs.

These temporary repairs are shown in the photo below.

The crew had permanent repairs completed by April 1.

I Think I'll Take a Selfie!

Columbia Maintenance Crew Leader Brad Pefferman was assisting Senior Financial Services Technician Staci Pickett with inventory when he snapped this accidental "selfie." The inventory sticker was nearly impossible to read due to its location on the underside of a radio, so Brad



came up with the idea of taking a picture of the inventory numbers. Brad just happened to expertly photobomb the image by mistake.

Around the District

Senior Human Resources Technician Cheyanne Stark meets with the public during a job fair in Boonville. The fair was an effort to help workers laid off by a local plant transition to new employment.

District Traffic Engineer Trent Brooks poses with representatives from Eugene High School and the Missouri Coalition for Highway Safety during an awards ceremony. Eugene High School won the 2014 Battle of the Belt competition and received a 100-percent rating during a seat belt check at a school-sponsored event.

Connections
A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

April 9, 2015

St. Louis District

Building a Stronger Organization Through Diversity and Inclusion

by Shaunda White

Dr. Tim Crowley teaches employees how to keep workplace interactions positive.

Ashley Gray helps employees identify practices that lead to inclusion.

Becky Brietzke teaches employees about the significance of body language in her Introduction to the Deaf Culture presentation.

More than 130 district employees gained knowledge on embracing cultural differences and overcoming exclusiveness in the workplace at a conference last week. The Regional Diversity and Inclusion conference gave employees the opportunity to engage in open discussions on the benefits of diversity and its impact on MoDOT.

This year's speakers and topics were:

Dr. Tim Crowley, CEO and founder of Crowley Leadership – "How to Overcome Micro-Inequities in the Workplace" – A presentation that helped employees focus on their interactions with others and how to make them positive and effective.

Ashley Gray, Leadership for Diversity & Inclusion at Washington University – "The Mosiac Project" – This presentation engaged employees in group activities that increased awareness of how limited information can lead to stereo-types and incorrect assumptions.

Beckie Brietzke, MoDOT HR Specialist in the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division – "Introduction to the Deaf Culture" – A presentation that created awareness of how hearing people and deaf people think differently because they experience life differently. It focused on how body language is constant communication and should be consistent.

The St. Louis district held its first Regional Diversity and Inclusion conference in 2011. Each year since, the conference has been in great demand and aligns with MoDOT's value statements:

- **Be Safe,**
- **Be Accountable,**
- **Be Respectful,**
- **Be Inclusive,**
- **Be Bold,**
- **Be Better, and**
- **Be One Team**

So that we can be a better organization.

"Each year the diversity conference gets better. This year I received a larger than normal amount of positive feedback from employees expressing gratitude for these conferences. I look forward to having many more in the years to come for the good of our organization," said Javal Burton, human resources manager.

Around the District....

Senior Maintenance Worker Kevin Wildhaber (standing) speaks with 3rd graders about the safety of seatbelts on Career Day at Bayless Elementary.

Motorist Assist Operator Tiesun Hochlan (right) is recognized by Assistant District Engineer Bill Schnell (left) at the staff meeting last month for recieving a letter expressing gratitude from a motorist he assisted on the highway.

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Comments & Suggestions

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To view or print other pages, click on the links below:

CO NW NE
KC CD SL SW SE

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

April 9, 2015

Southwest District

Home

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print Entire Edition

Southwest District at Work

FOOD FOR THOUGHT - District Design Engineer Stacy Reese helps a Springfield Public Schools student build a tower using spaghetti and gumdrops during a career fair at the Springfield District Office on April 2. A group of 40 high school students visited with Southwest District employees about MoDOT careers. (Photo/David Mitchell)

SAFETY FIRST - Senior Risk Management Technician Jodie Payne shows high school students how to use a defibrillator during the career fair. The Springfield Public Schools BASE program visited the Southwest District Office on April 2 to learn more about MoDOT careers. (Photo/David Mitchell)

GROUNDBREAKING – Southwest District Engineer Becky Baltz (center) is joined by local Joplin leaders and area legislators to officially kick off construction of the new Crossroads Interchange at I-44/I-49 & Jasper County Road 190 on March 26. The interchange features a new higher and wider bridge and single-lane roundabouts at either end of the new span. (Photo/David Mitchell)

TAKE IT SLOW – Seymour Senior Maintenance Worker Christina Dawson alerts drivers to slow down as they approach a bridge washing crew on Route AB in Webster County. (Photo/David Mitchell)

Buffalo Maintenance Worker, Former MoDOT Employee, Competing for Own Hunting TV Show

Reprinted with permission of the Buffalo Reflex

The Ozark Mountain Hunt Co., which includes Buffalo residents Travis Pierce (former MoDOT maintenance employee) and Eric Greig (Buffalo Senior Maintenance Worker), is competing in a nationwide contest on the Pursuit Channel.

The contest is between six groups from across the U.S. that are fighting for a chance to win their own hunting show.

Footage from the groups' hunts is shown on the show "The Search," and Ozark Mountain Hunt Co. member Pierce's hunt was filmed by Greig in Dallas County in October. Pierce's hunt aired in January on "The Search."

Other members of Ozark Mountain Hunt Co. are from the Branson area and northwest Arkansas.

The winner is chosen by online voting, which ended March 29.

The winning group will be announced in April.

(This story appeared in the March 25 edition of the Buffalo Reflex)

Eric Greig (left) and Travis Pierce of Buffalo are part of a group that is competing for its own hunting TV show.

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CO NW NE
KC CD SL SW SE

Connections

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Southeast District

Employees Recognized for Going Above and Beyond

Safety on our roadways is an important part of the job for MoDOT employees every day. This spring, three MoDOT employees helped customers on Interstate 55, and those customers took the time to thank our employees.

(l to r) Johnny Hughes, Kevin Evans and Skip Alexander recently stepped in to assist stranded motorists along I-55. Their actions were greatly appreciated, and the customers they assisted contacted MoDOT to express their gratitude.

The first note came to us from Cal Crader, a Sikeston resident, thanking us for helping his wife. Senior Construction Inspectors, Kevin Evans and Johnny Hughes stopped to give Mrs. Crader a helping hand:

My wife Valerie and I live in Sikeston. She had a tire blow-out today on I-55 NB, near MM 73 in Scott County on her way to Cape Girardeau.
Shortly after the incident two MODOT employees stopped to check on her and ended up providing assistance with installing the spare tire, loading the flat tire in her trunk and getting her on her way quickly and safely.
They went above and beyond what was required in that circumstance.
She didn't get their names, but we wanted to say thank you to them again for their assistance today.

Sincerely,
Cal Crader, P.E.
Project Engineer/Manager
Schneider Electric of St. Louis, LLC

The second note came from Joel Guiling from Cape Girardeau, Mo., who wanted to thank Harry "Skip" Alexander, Electrician:

On Sunday morning [March 29, 2015] on my way to church, I had a flat tire going north on Interstate 55.
Before I could make a decision, your employee, Skip Alexander, had returned to help me with my problem.
He is a very nice gentleman. I'm sure he makes an excellent employee. I'm so glad that we still have people like him in our country.

Sincerely,
Joel Guiling

Thanks to caring employees like Kevin, Johnny and Skip, MoDOT continues to provide Outstanding Customer Service every day!

Local Schools Cash In on Buckling Up

Bernie High School Receives Top Honors with 100 Percent Seat Belt Use

Missouri schools took the challenge to buckle up and made it click with students. Across the state, 105 schools participated in the 2014 Battle of the

Belt Challenge-a competition to raise seat belt use among teens. In Southeast Missouri, 23 schools participated in the challenge.

Participating schools launched two surprise seat belt checks at each school to measure student seat belt use before and after an educational campaign. In addition, schools had the opportunity to submit a 30-second video spot to encourage their peers to buckle up.

Bernie High School received top honors with 100 percent seat belt usage during the Battle of the Belt Challenge. In addition to having the highest overall percentage among Southeast Missouri schools, Bernie High School was one of only eight schools across the state to achieve 100 percent usage.

Bernie High School received top honors with 100 percent seat belt usage during the Battle of the Belt Challenge. An assembly was held at Bernie High School March 12, with guest speaker Penny Lorenz, Assistant Director of ThinkFirst Missouri.

An assembly was held at Bernie High School March 12, with guest speaker Penny Lorenz, Assistant Director of ThinkFirst Missouri. Sharee Galnore of Team Spirit and Sandy Taurone of the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety awarded the school a Gold Banner and $500 check from American Family Insurance during the assembly.

During the 2014 challenge, East Prairie High School was named Most Improved in the Southeast District with a 97.42 percent increase.

In addition, the following Southeast Missouri schools achieved gold (99-100 percent usage), silver (95-98 percent usage) and bronze (91-94 percent usage) levels:

- Saxony Lutheran High School 99.00% (Gold Banner)
- Notre Dame Regional High School 98.34% (Silver Banner)
- Oak Ridge High School 97.44% (Silver Banner)
- Thomas W. Kelly High School 94.67% (Bronze Banner)
- Norwood High School 94.12% (Bronze Banner)
- Lesterville High School 92.86% (Bronze Banner)
- Clearwater High School 90.72% (Bronze Banner)

Jackson High School will also receive a participation banner for the greatest number of students surveyed.

Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death for people 15-20 years old. Results of a 2013 survey among Missouri teens indicate 33 percent of teens are not wearing their seat belt putting them at greater risk to get killed or injured in traffic crashes. Seven out of 10 teens killed in Missouri traffic crashes are unbuckled.

For more information, please visit www.savemolives.com.

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